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The Right Reverend
Paul Moore Jr.

TESTIMONY OF THE RT. REV. PAUL MOORE, JR.

Episcopal Bishop of New York, Ret.

Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

February 27, 1992

My name is Paul Moore, Jr., formerly the Episcopal Bishop of New York. My wife Brenda Hughes Moore and I visited East Timor a little over two years ago. In World War II, I served in combat as a rifle platoon leader in the Marine Corps and I have visited many places where people were oppressed: Mississippi in 1964, Vietnam on a peace mission in 1970, Nicaragua shortly after the revolution, South Africa, and Moscow before **glasnost**. However, even in 1989 East Timor was a more repressive regime than I had ever encountered. In Dili, soldiers in full battle dress stood on street corners and everyone we talked to was questioned subsequently by the police or army, although we were there as tourists. It was almost impossible to rent a car, and when we did go into the countryside we were frequently stopped, searched and urged to go no further by the soldiers at the checkpoints. This was and is a full-blown military occupation some sixteen years after the original Indonesian invasion. As a result of the invasion and subsequent occupation, more than 100,000 people and perhaps as many as 200,000 people have been murdered and starved to death, out of a population of 700,000.

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Since our visit to East Timor, we have been in close touch with the situation. We have frequent phone calls and letters from Timorese in exile and others with whom we maintain regular contact, and have received fresh information as recently as this week.

When we visited East Timor we had many conversations with clergy and others. Our first interview with Mgr. Belo, Bishop of East Timor, was most revealing. He was frightened even to speak with us; indeed, he said absolutely nothing for the first ten minutes. I saw fear in his eyes. Later, he told us he was afraid that he would be assassinated like Archbishop Romero. A dozen youths were living at his residence at the time in sanctuary, because they were afraid they would be arrested and tortured if they left his house. Other interviews confirmed a pattern of absolute repression.

Given what we saw when we were there, we became increasingly worried that the rising vigor of the young peoples' independence movement would be an excuse for a Tiananmen Square kind of episode. I said so in a letter published in the New York Times on Jan. 22, 1991, which is appended to my testimomy and which I hope will be included in the record of this proceeding, together with a letter published on Feb. 17, 1992. Suffice it to say that in the months leading up to the planned Portuguese Parliamentary visit in late October 1991, there were many fears expressed on this score. Sure enough, on November 12, such a cold-blooded massacre occurred, and will be described by others at this hearing.

From everything we learned when we were in East Timor and from the documentary record of the past 16 years, it is evident that the tragedy on Nov. 12 was no aberration. These horrors are a direct result of the illegal Indonesian occupation of East Timor, and that occupation must be addressed if there is to be a just and lasting solution to the problem.

The illegality of the Indonesian occupation, the crass role of Australia in the Timor Gap Treaty, and other matters of international law have been addressed by others. Suffice it to say that Indonesia's occupation has been recognized by no international body, and therefore this is no "internal matter" of the Indonesian government in which the international community has no right to intervene. The international community not only has the right but also the obligation to intervene, particularly the United States. That is why I am here today as a United States citizen and as a bishop of the Church.

Reliable sources confirm that President Suharto refrained from invading East Timor in 1975 until he could be sure the United States would not object. The day after President Ford and Secretary Kissinger visited Jakarta, Indonesia launched its fullscale invasion. Congressional testimony by the State Department in 1977 revealed that roughly 90 percent of the military equipment available to the Indonesians at the time of the invasion were American-supplied. In other words, we shared responsibility for the invasion and for the massacre and deaths of as many as two hundred thousand innocent people. Furthermore, we share

responsibility for the ongoing repression, torture and disappearances. Can we with any integrity profess that we entered the Persian Gulf War to free Kuwait, in whose occupation we had no hand, and now stand aside with bloodied hands and watch the massacre of the East Timorese without taking strong action?

I am deeply ashamed of our country's longstanding policy on East Timor. I am ashamed that we stand before the world seeming to minimize these brutalities in which we had a leading role and which we still support with foreign aid and a benign relationship with the Suharto government. If indeed, now that the Cold War is over, which apparently was the alleged reason for our originally backing the invasion of East Timor, and we stand, as President Bush has declaimed, the Leader of the World, then it is incumbent on us to take immediate action. We must persuade or force Indonesia to cease and desist from all human rights abuse in East Timor and to call for a referendum on self-determination under the sponsorship of the United Nations.

There is growing interest in this issue in the United States. Strong editorials have appeared in the Washington Post, the New York Times and the Boston Globe, amongst others. Letters to the President and Secretary of State were signed by a majority of House members in 1990 and a majority of the Senate in 1991, and a concurrent resolution passed late last year urging the President to take steps immediately to redress these wrongs.

Allow me to offer the following recommendations:

1) There is an urgent need for a continuous international presence in East Timor to ensure that tragedies such as that of Nov. 12 do not re-occur. The recent situation in El Salvador, in which a bitter and bloody conflict is now being monitored by United Nations officials with strong human rights safeguards in place, can serve as a working model for international action on East Timor.

2) The United States should reconsider its **de facto** recognition of Indonesia's illegal annexation of East Timor. Despite official Indonesian protestations to the contrary, the State Department has maintained throughout that no valid act of self-determination has taken place in East Timor. In light of the Nov. 12 massacre and the longstanding climate of conflict in the territory, there is little justification for continuing American **de facto** recognition of the Indonesian position.

3) The United States should eliminate the International Military Educational Training program for the Indonesian government.

4) The United States should exert pressure through the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI), to bring about an end to human rights abuses. US influence at IGGI should be used to promote a free and fair election under United Nations auspices to provide the East Timorese with their right to self-determination. The IGGI granted nearly $5 billion last year in multilateral aid to Indonesia, a large portion of which consisted of US funds.

5) Bilateral US aid policies regarding Indonesia should also be conditional on an end to human rights abuses and movement toward self-determination carried out under United Nations auspices. United States votes at the World Bank should be subject to similar conditions.

These and other steps should be taken before additional lives are lost. The new Indonesian military commander, who was in East Timor during long years of carnage from 1976-80, when many tens of thousands of people perished, on Jan. 10 stated his hard-line intentions in the present situation. The responses of Congress and the Administration, both in public and in private, with regard to the current terror and the ongoing illegal occupation, as exemplified by the military commander's statement and actions, must be firm.

The New York Times

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1991

Indonesia Is Still Oppressing East Timor

To the Editor:

I was dismayed by the Jan. 5 letter from the press counselor of the Indonesian Embassy on Indonesian policy in East Timor. It responded to your excellent editorial of Dec. 7 and distorted the history of the Indonesian invasion 15 years ago.

During World War II, I was in combat as a marine and over the years have been in several countries where military conditions prevailed. However, what I witnessed in a visit to East Timor last year was as bad as anything I have encountered in suppression of human rights. For instance, the example of free expression the letter cited with pride, a demonstration for self-determination during the Pope's visit, resulted in the arrest and torture of many young people. Subsequent demonstrations have elicited the same response.

If the people of East Timor desire to be part of Indonesia, why is a large occupation force necessary 15 years after the invasion?

There is little to indicate any lasting changes over the last year. On the contrary, on New Year's Day, highly reliable sources in East Timor reported that at least 17 young people were taking refuge in a church in the capital, fleeing Indonesian authorities, who are said to be carrying out torture and beatings of dissenters daily. In short, the terror, abuse and oppression that I witnessed on my visit to East Timor in late 1989 are not over. There are also fears that, far from tolerating the increasingly vocal dissent of the student movement for self-determination in the territory, Indonesian authorities will respond with a Tiananmen Square-type crackdown.

For this reason alone, growing Congressional interest in the East Timor situation, manifested most recently by a Nov. 19 letter to Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d by a majority of the House of Representatives, led by Representative Tony Hall of Ohio, is well placed.

Official United States pressure on Indonesia, together with increased news media interest in the unfolding developments in East Timor, the reestablishment of human rights and eventually a United Nations-supervised referendum on self-determination is needed before it is too late.

(Right Rev.) PAUL MOORE
Episcopal Bishop (Retired)
New York, Jan. 10, 1991

The New York Times

LETTERS MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1992

East Timor Needs Elections and End to Terror

To the Editor:

In "Indonesia Acts on East Timor Killings" (letter, Feb. 5), the writer complains of an "erroneous impression" in "The Tiananmen in East Timor," your excellent editorial of Jan. 21. What is misleading is the Indonesian Government's damage-control campaign following the Nov. 12 massacre of unarmed mourners and demonstrators in East Timor.

The writer speaks in glowing terms of the Government-appointed commission's report on the Nov. 12 events. But Asia Watch has stated that the findings of this report "cannot be accepted." And many credible sources, including people I came to know when I visited East Timor two years ago, insist that the report merely diverts attention from severe continuing repression.

The commission's few grudging admissions were a clear response to calls in Congress and elsewhere for a suspension of nearly $5 billion in multilateral aid to Indonesia. So was the transfer (not sacking, as the writer states) of two generals.

These and other official maneuvers mean very little to the East Timorese, in light of the atmosphere of terror and denial of human rights. The new Indonesian general in charge of East Timor has indicated his hard-line intentions. And at least 14 survivors of the Nov. 12 massacre face subversion charges, which can carry the death penalty.

While the United States condemned the Nov. 12 killings, influencing the Indonesian Government to acknowledge some blame, which the writer finds praiseworthy, is hardly an adequate response. The Bush Administration should be putting strong pressure on Indonesia to end the terror and human rights violations; and to allow a free election under United Nations auspices so that the people there may finally exercise their legal right to self-determination, which is at the heart of the problem in East Timor.

PAUL MOORE

New York, Feb. 5, 1992

The writer is the retired Episcopal Bishop of New York.